

BOARD OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION
December 5-6, 2013
AmericInn, Ft. Pierre, SD

New Member Orientation for Board of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR)
and Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (B/SBVI)

New Member Orientation was held the afternoon of December 5th for members of the BVR and B/SBVI. BVR members included Colleen Moran, Chad Maxon, Elaine Roberts (Chairperson), Craig Eschenbaum (Vice Chairperson) and Eric Weiss (Division Director). B/SBVI members: Connie Sullivan, Linda O'Connor-Ohayon, Gaye Mattke (Division Director) and Teresa Nold. Others present included: Bernie Grimme (DRS staff), Jennifer Geuther (DRS Staff) Colette Wagoner (Board staff) and Robert Kean (South Dakota Advocacy Services and BVR/BSBVI Member). Interpreters were Julie Paluch and Amanda Wermers.

Topics covered: On-line training modules - History of Rehabilitation, Overview of the Rehabilitation Act, Vocational Principles and Policies, and Role of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC). Other topics included an organizational outline from Rehabilitation Services Administration, Department of Human Services, Divisions of Rehabilitation Services, Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired, Developmental Disabilities and SD Developmental Center. The working relationships between the Divisions, other state agencies and other organizations were explained. The Executive Director South Dakota Advocacy Services provided the history of the organization, component programs, agency mission, and services including the Client Assistance Program. In a separate meeting, information was shared with BVR members about the VR application process and general Board information (i.e., staff support, reimbursement process, meeting agendas, committees, and related activities).

Joint Meeting of the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation and Board of
Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired

BVR Members present: Elaine Roberts, Craig Eschenbaum, Matt Cain, Brett Glirbas, Robert Kean, Lyle Cook, Chad Maxon, Colleen Moran, Melissa Flor, and Eric Weiss. B/SBVI Members present: Julie Briggs, Karla Bucknall, Eric Rippentrop, Teresa Nold, Bill Molseed, Gaye Mattke, Lynda O'Connor-Ohayon, Patrick Czerny, Marilyn Steffen, and Ken Rollman. Others present: Jennifer Geuther, Bernie Grimme, Rich

Eschenbaum, Becky Blume, Gloria Pearson, Sandy Neyhart, and Nancy Hoyme. Interpreters were: Amanda Wermers and Julie Paluch.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS: Elaine Roberts, BVR Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting. She asked BVR members to identify themselves to include which board they serve on, in what capacity they serve, and where they are from. Marilyn Steffen, B/SBVI Chairperson introduced herself and asked fellow SBVI board members to do the same. Gaye Mattke introduced Gloria Pearson, Department of Human Services Secretary. Gloria thanked everyone and provided a little background information: served as executive director of Ability Building Services (Yankton), a community support provider; executive director of Community Support Providers of South Dakota, and for 11 years she led Dakota Milestones in Chamberlain. She was raised in Sisseton, married with 3 grown sons. Her husband is a practicing Episcopal minister in Yankton, thus she is maintaining two households and an office in Yankton where she typically is on Fridays. Others in attendance were also asked to identify themselves.

SPECIAL EDUCATION'S INDICATOR 14: Melissa Flor spoke to this agenda item and provided three handouts (see attached). Indicator 14 requires states to report the percentage of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEP's in effect at the time they left school and were 1) enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school; 2) enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school; 3) enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school. She noted that no students with visual impairments were contacted in the last study. She reviewed the "2012 South Dakota Statewide School District Post High School Outcomes Survey Report of 2010 -2011 Exiters with Disabilities" handout. The results of the survey were organized around adult living, participation in higher education, other post-secondary education or training, competitive employment, and other employment. She explained that the trend data for South Dakota is doing very well, showing that 75-80% of students fall in one of the three categories noted above. She also explained that the data reflects that if a student participates in Youth Leadership Forum, Catch the Wave, Project Skills, or self advocacy training, the student is more likely to attend post-secondary education or to be employed. She stated that school districts can look at information on the website, which is separated by districts and they can identify areas needing improvement. Currently, the studies conducted up to this point do not include students on 504 plans. The state now has 4 years of trend data with a response

rate of 50-60%. This information can be shared electronically if individuals are interested.

GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE "EMPLOYMENT WORKS": Eric Weiss spoke to the Governor announcing the formation of a task force to study employing South Dakotans with disabilities as part of his Employment Works Initiative. The task force was led by the Department of Human Services and brought private and public sectors together. The task force had representation of people with disabilities, family members, business community, state government agencies, legislators, service providers and nonprofit stakeholders. The task force met three times to discuss what is and isn't working for employing people with disabilities, and a report is being compiled for the Governor. Four priority areas were: 1) employing people with disabilities; 2) supporting businesses; 3) preparing people with disabilities for employment; and 4) what is the best use of resources. The due date of the report has been extended, and it will include goals and strategies. Eric noted one item, a recommendation of dedicating an FTE to working with employers across the state. Eric noted that two staff members from SBVI and DRS were serving on a national employment team but they couldn't dedicate much time to the project. Gaye noted that presentations were made to the task force regarding current activities (i.e., Julie Briggs on the Business Resource Network; Bill Molseed on Workforce Investment Activities). The draft report has been submitted to the Governor's office and is expected to be finalized by the start of session.

COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE NEEDS ASSESSMENT: Bernie Grimme explained Robert Jahner's travel nightmares due to the weather, and linked him in to the meeting by telephone. It was stated that the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) is conducted every three years, mandated by federal regulations. Robert Jahner was involved with conducting the assessment three years ago for the Divisions, two boards and the Statewide Independent Living Council. This current contract is with the two divisions, Region 8 TACE and Robert Jahner. The University of Northern Colorado has Region 8 TACE, which is the office of 'Technical Assistance and Continuing Education' funded by Rehabilitation Services Administration. Robert has over thirty years working with vocational rehabilitation services, thus he has an extensive background in this area. Robert used a PowerPoint presentation to walk members through the process and the product. This included the "What and Why" of a CSNA, which is the foundation of both divisions, which are needs based programs. The CSNA is the basis for the Division's State Plan goals, objectives and strategies. The reason for conducting the study is because things change. If things change, then so must the State Plan

and related attachments. The scope of the needs assessment is people with disabilities (people with the most significant disabilities, including the need for supported employment; minorities with disabilities; individuals with disabilities who are unserved or underserved; and the needs of individuals with disabilities who are using other parts of the Workforce Investment System. Conducting the assessment and analyzing the results will lead to changes in the State Plans of extending, modifying and/or adding new goals. An executive team made up of the two Division Directors, Division staff and board chairpersons will make decisions about the scope of the assessment. The executive team also discusses what settings, instruments and databases to develop to learn what we must learn, and set timelines. Robert reviewed the six stages of CSNA and the role of the Boards in this process. Elaine interjected that if there are members with ideas or thoughts regarding data, to let the executive team know. Marilyn stated that this process is building upon what we have and not needing to start over, building upon the "system" we currently have. Bernie added that there will be information specific to each division and Robert will work with both divisions, staff and board committees to develop the goals, objectives and strategies. Robert also spoke to any changes within the last three years that might have an impact. Items noted included the reorganization of the Department of Human Services and the pending information to come from the Governor's Task Force. Someone asked about Reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act, and if this occurs, could this change things, and the reply was that it is an "unknown" factor at this point. It was suggested that the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN) focus group data be reviewed as part of the needs assessment.

STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL: Bill Molseed provided this overview and he began by complimenting the state of South Dakota for the high degree of collaboration, working for the betterment of the consumer. He explained there are Workforce Investment Boards in various communities across the state, and only one State Workforce Development Council, which he serves on. The Workforce Council was created by an executive order established in 2000 after the passage of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). The Council oversees the implementation of the workforce training programs in South Dakota funded by WIA. It is a seventeen member council, which represents business, labor and education interests. A majority of members are from the private sector. There are also representatives from state departments (Labor and Regulation, Education and Human Services; Governor's Office of Economic Development; and the Board of Regents). The primary duty of the Council is to provide advice to the Governor on workforce issues and to ensure employment related services are made available to

South Dakotans; whereas the Department of Labor and Regulation (DOLR) carries out the administrative authority for several titles under WIA and to ensure the coordination and collaboration with other state agencies. He spoke about the twelve DOLR offices across the state and being co-located with other agencies (DHS, DSS) which promotes collaboration. He spoke about the Disability Employment Initiative grant working with youth with disabilities, and over the course of three years the percentage of youth participating in work incentives programs has increased from 2% to 15%.

AMERICAN INDIAN VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAMS: Lyle greeted everyone and thanked them for their involvement in their capacity as board members. Lyle defined these as Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Programs, funded under the Department of Education (Title I, Part B, Section 110, Part C, Section 121), which is why sometimes these programs are referred to as 121 programs. Some differences between state agencies and Tribal programs are that Tribal programs must compete for funding every five years and the Tribe must provide a 10% match, whereas the states receive automatic funding based upon population. There are unique cultural values and characteristics. The first grant was awarded in 1981, and now there are 85 grantees. A typical Tribal program has 3-4 staff members and funding awards range from \$350,000 to \$365,000. There are four Tribes in South Dakota with an American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Program: 1) Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe; 2) Lower Brule Sioux Tribe; 3) Oglala Sioux Tribe; and 4) Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. Each Tribal program defines their service boundary for eligibility requirements. Lyle spoke to the Tribal perspective outlining the service area, culture, language and Tribal work environment. He spoke to the difficulty of serving people due to the size of territory. For example, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe serves 18 communities and they have a mobile unit which travels to the people, and they try to get to each community (either on a weekly or monthly basis). Tribal Programs recognize "Opiciya" - Traditional Way of Life which includes: belief/spirituality; humility; wisdom; generosity; fortitude; bravery; and care and compassion. Okolakiciye Owasocunpi – is the tribal work environment, which recognizes the spoken language (Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota), traditional ceremonies and tribal supports. Lyle noted the directors of each program in the state along with their contact information (see attached).

STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL: Bernie Grimme reported on the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC). He explained that there are members of the BVR and B/SBVI that serve on the SILC, and reports are shared at each meeting. The SILC has a different focus and has been in the process of

updating the State Plan goals and objectives. New committees have been formed to work on different areas: Consumer Services, Housing, Public Awareness, and Assistive Technology. The three Centers for Independent Living (Independent Living Choices, Western Resources for Disabled Independence and Native American Advocacy Program) provide updates at each meeting, as well as the two Divisions, Older Blind Program, and an Executive Secretary's report. The SILC will meet again on January 17th in Pierre (Governor's Inn).

Board of Vocational Rehabilitation Meeting

Members present: Craig Eschenbaum, Colleen Moran, Melissa Flor, Chad Maxon, Robert Kean, Elaine Roberts, Eric Weiss, Brett Glirbas and Matt Cain. **Members absent:** Lyle Cook, Darla McGuire, Joe Rehurek, Carol Kirchgessler, Leo Hallan, and Patty Kuglitsch. **Others present:** Bernie Grimme, Jennifer Geuther, Rich Eschenbaum and Colette Wagoner.

OPENING ACTIONS: Welcome and Introductions: Elaine Roberts, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 1:15 pm and asked for introductions. She reminded everyone of the meeting protocol and noted that it was included with the agenda which was mailed to all members. She asked for a motion to approve the agenda, if there were no changes. **MOTION MADE (M) TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS MAILED, SECONDED (S), AND CARRIED (C).** She noted the September 12-13 meeting minutes and asked for any edits, none noted, **MOTION TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 12/13, 2013 MEETING MINUTES, MSC.** Next, she referenced the minutes from the Board's Executive Committee from November 14th, pointing out four funding recommendations being made by the Executive Committee. Members elected to approve the minutes in general and will take action on the funding items one at a time. **MOTION TO APPROVE THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING FROM NOVEMBER 14, 2013 AND TAKE ACTION ON EACH FUNDING RECOMMENDATION SEPERATELY, MSC. MOTION TO APPROVE THE BOARD'S PAYMENT OF \$1,884.87 FOR THE 2013 GOVERNOR'S AWARDS CEREMONY, MSC.** The next item was the Coalition Membership Renewal, and Colleen noted she serves on the Coalition's Board of Directors, thus abstained from voting. **MOTION TO RENEW THE BOARD'S COALITION MEMBERSHIP (SOUTH DAKOTA COALITION OF CITIZENS WITH DISABILITIES) FOR \$35.00 AND A \$65 DONATION, MSC. MOTION TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO THE 2014 DARE TO DREAM CONFERENCE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2,000.00, MSC.** The next item was the

2014 Autism Lighting the Way Conference and Elaine noted her involvement on this committee and abstained from voting. **MOTION TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL SUPPORT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2,000 TO THE 2014 LIGHTING THE WAY CONFERENCE, MSC.**

TIME FOR PUBLIC COMMENT: Elaine asked for any public comment, and there was none.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Elaine shared with members that SD Parent Connection and South Dakota Advocacy were chosen as a model for their working relationship. A video was made with staff from both agencies to reflect the collaborating partnership.

DIVISION DIRECTOR'S REPORT: DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS: Eric Weiss noted his time as director, stating he has been very busy and that his job has been made much easier through the dedication and commitment of the staff, making his transition much easier. He introduced Jennifer Geuther as a new program specialist for the Division, and stated she attended the new member orientation yesterday.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION: The 89th Legislative Session starts January 14th which is the same date of the Governor's Address. Last year, DHS had several bills introduced during session as a result of the sunset review and the reorganization of the department. At this point in time, DHS does not have any bills to be introduced.

DIVISION BUDGET: Eric noted the Governor's Budget Address held on December 2nd for State Fiscal Year 2015. The Division recommended an increase of \$157,059 in general funds for the Medicaid Waiver program. He noted that \$4.6 million was spent last year on client services, of which 1/5 spent on job placement/coaching and 1/4 spent on post-secondary education.

SURVEY OF PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH HEARING LOSS: This survey was conducted to assess the needs of children with hearing loss. Eric stated he wasn't involved with this at all in the beginning and thus he needed to gather information to provide this update. The survey was developed in March 2012 and conducted that summer. There were 194 responses which resulted in a 60% response rate. Doctors Calhoon and Cooch (Black Hills State University) conducted the study and presented the results to the groups involved. Those involved included the Departments of Human Services, Education, Board of Regents, School for the Blind

and Visually Impaired, SD Parent Connection and a few others. Eric located the final report and survey findings, and received permission to share the information with members. This information will be posted on the Department's website. DHS is now reviewing the results and determining how they can best affect change in the area of providing services to children with hearing loss. Elaine noted that there are other entities acting upon the recommendations and conducting activities as a result of the findings as well.

FALL CONFERENCE: This is the annual conference offering different tracks for vocational rehabilitation staff, providers, teachers, and others. It was titled "Beyond the Yellow Ribbon" and had a veteran focus. Of the 180 attendees 1/3 were VR staff, 1/3 were providers and 1/3 were board/council members. The timing of the conference coincided with the federal government shutdown, which impacted the attendance of some presenters. Organizers were able to recruit local presenters, and it turned out they were well received and knowledgeable in their areas. The evaluations reflected very high ratings for the sessions. Next year's conference will be held October 7-9, 2014 in Aberdeen and will not have the teacher/transition track. The Office of Special Education will host their training in July instead.

FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2013 YEAR END REPORT: Bernie spoke to this agenda item and provided a handout with his PowerPoint presentation. He addressed the type of reports submitted to Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) i.e., R911, RSA 2, RSA 722, which includes information on client data, closed cases, and client appeals. The RSA Annual Report was recently released which combines data from all reports and compares a state with the national numbers, for example you can look at the number of SSA recipients served by a state compared to the national average, employment outcomes and the use of VR funds. South Dakota is well under the national average of dollars spent on administrative and VR personnel, whereas the state spends a larger percentage on client services than the national average. He spoke to people applying for services and the impact of the economy on this, 'when the economy is good – less people needing services; when the economy is bad, more people need VR services!' The other slides had information on the source of referrals; self-referral was the largest area of referral with schools and community mental health centers coming in next. The largest age group served by the Division was transition age, and there is a growing trend in the baby boomer age group. Other information he highlighted: primary impairment of eligible individuals, trends in successful closures, closed cases, benefit specialist services, education level of successful closures, payments for client services, social security reimbursements, program income, Ticket to Work and number of tickets

assigned, and changes in federal reporting. A question was asked about the message of “consumers working themselves off benefits”. The reply was that the message the Division is promoting now is one of working to raise earnings. Another question asked was whether the Division tracks the number of consumers who speak English as a second language. The response was that the R911 does not collect this information.

STAFF UPDATES: Annual Report: Board staff shared that she has been drafting the Board’s annual report for the Governor and RSA Commissioner. A draft has been forwarded to the Executive Committee and edits have been received and incorporated. An updated draft was disseminated to the entire board for further review and comment. Staff can receive edits through December 20th, at which time final changes will be incorporated with the expectation of submitting the report by December 27th.

Governor’s Awards: The 2013 ceremony was recently finalized (bills, pictures disseminated, stories to area newspapers) and the next cycle is approaching. A question was asked about delaying the timing of soliciting nominations. In the past, the solicitation for nominations was disseminated the end of January and nominations were due the end of February. The review committee typically met prior to the Board’s March meeting, forwarded their recommendations through the Division, onto the Department, and onto the Governor’s Office for final selection. The ceremony is scheduled to coincide with the Governor’s schedule which has happened during the months of June, July, September and October. Again, the date is scheduled to allow the Governor’s attendance to make the presentation of the awards. The discussion was providing ideas of how to better communicate with people across the state about the process and the timing or sequencing of events so individuals have a better sense of what is going on (provide sequence of events with the solicitation of nominations, and provide information on the Department’s website). The solicitation could be pushed out a bit by disseminating the information by mid-February or so. Members were asked about serving as a reviewer and Craig, Matt and Melissa agreed. Melissa indicated she would be willing to step down, if another member agreed to serve. Staff was asked to email all members to see if anyone would be interested in serving as a reviewer.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM): Elaine explained that this agenda item would also encompass the “Brainstorming Time” item slated next on the agenda. It was explained that in the past, the NDEAM request for funding proposals were sent out the end of January to the district offices and before doing

this more conversation was needed regarding Board expectations. Discussion items included: emphasis should be on employment issues; these shouldn't be community events only for individuals who receive services; greater need of employer involvement; and the difficulty of obtaining the involvement and attendance of smaller employers. It was explained that these events are typically organized by local VR staff. Discussion points included: how to better market to employers, businesses, and human resource managers; who is involved with planning and organizing at the current level? Members who attended some of the NDEAM events spoke to utilizing individuals from the surrounding area as presenters/low cost; one speaker addressed accommodations; a panel of employers were utilized speaking to the benefits of hiring people with disabilities; some events topics were disability awareness/etiquette not employment specific information. Bernie shared that there is a DDN meeting on January 13th at 2:00 pm and this timeslot could be utilized to gather Division staff and board members and have dialogue on future NDEAM events. Brett, Colleen and Elaine all indicated their desire to participate in the discussion. The DDN sites will be forwarded to the full board for their information.

OTHER BUSINESS: There was none.

CLOSING ACTIONS: Future Agenda Items: State Plan information, public meetings, and Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment. Schedule Next Meeting: Members chose the dates of March 31st and April 1st for the next meeting, with the first choice of location in Huron and second choice being in Pierre.

MOTION TO ADJOURN, MSC. Elaine thanked everyone for their participation and wished everyone a happy and safe holiday season.